

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 4, 6-9, 12, 13, 17-20, 22-28, 30, 31, 33-35, and 37-39 are now pending in the present application, for a total of 27 claims, 3 of which are independent.

The Abstract has been amended to remove reference numbers that were in the International application.

All claims have been amended to remove reference numbers that were in the International application.

The following dependent claims have been withdrawn from the international application to reduce the number of claims being submitted in the US national stage application. Thus they are canceled without prejudice. Claims: 2, 5, 10, 11, 14-16, 21, 32, 36, 40, and 41. Additional reasons apply to the cancellation of claims 3 and 29, as discussed hereinbelow.

In addition to deleting reference numbers, claim 8 is further amended to correct an obvious typographical error wherein the article "a" is replaced by the article "an" before the word "outward".

Claim Amendments and Comments in Response to Written Opinion of ISA

In the international application, claims 1, 2, 28, and 30 were rejected for lack of novelty under PCT Article 33(2) as being anticipated by Wang 5,370,060.

Applicant respectfully submits that Wang does not anticipate "two end hooks on *distal longitudinally outward ends* of the hook bar assembly" as cited in independent claim 1; nor does Wang anticipate "providing two end hooks on *distal longitudinally outward ends* of the rack" as cited in independent claim 28. Instead, Wang's approximation of a hook bar assembly (swivel hooks 23 on retractable bars 22 in tubes 21) teaches two end hooks (23) on the *same* vertically upper end of two sliding portions (22) that are both above the rack (1). Thus independent claims 1 and 28 as originally written should be allowable over Wang, and therefore corresponding dependent claims 2 and 30 should also be allowable.

In the international application, dependent claims 3-6, 29, and 31 were rejected for lack of inventive step under PCT Article 33(3) as being obvious over Wang in view of Johnston 6,607,241.

Although this rejection is moot in light of the argued allowability of the independent claims, Applicant also wishes to note that neither Wang nor Johnston teach using a spring, especially "a spring connected for biasing the two end hooks with respect to each other" as cited in the original claim 3 (now incorporated by amendment into claim 1). Similarly, neither Wang nor Johnston teach "biasing the two end hooks with respect to each other" (original claim 29, now incorporated by amendment into claim 28), nor do they teach "biasing the end hook longitudinally outward" (claim 31).

Independent claim 1 is also amended to make it even stronger and more distinct from the known prior art by incorporating the substance of claim 3 into it as the last clause of claim 1. Since it is now redundant, claim 3 is canceled. A further clarifying amendment is to add language that limits the invention for use with "a first and a second headrest on one or more seats, each headrest having at least one headrest post", such that "one end hook is configured for hooking on a headrest post of the first headrest, and the other end hook is configured for hooking on a headrest post of the second headrest". The added language is supported by Figures 1A, 1B and 4 and their corresponding descriptions.

Similarly, independent claim 28 is also amended to make it even stronger and more distinct from the known prior art by incorporating the substance of claim 29 into it as the last clause of claim 28. Since it is now redundant, claim 29 is canceled. A further clarifying amendment is to add language that limits the inventive method for use within "a vehicle that has a first and a second headrest on one or more seats, each headrest having at least one headrest post", wherein the method includes the step of "configuring one end hook for hooking on a headrest post of the first headrest, and configuring the other end hook for hooking on a headrest post of the second headrest". The added language is supported by Figures 1A, 1B and 4 and their corresponding descriptions.

Conclusion

The undersigned Agent of Record has presented a preliminary amendment that argues against the rejections stated in the Written Opinion of ISA. This preliminary amendment also amends two of the three independent claims in order to further distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. Finally, this preliminary amendment also removes reference numbers from the Abstract and the Claims, and removes several dependent claims in order to reduce the number of excess claims in the application hereby submitted for entering the US national stage under 35 U.S.C. 371.

Respectfully submitted,



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